

Vibrant Villages ?

Rediscovering the Local

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A Talk in Three Parts

- The Village: Lost in Space ?
- Seeking Village Vibrancy : Recent Experiences
- Renewing Village Renewal



1. The Village: Lost in Space

Space is changing :

- RPA (Administration and Service Reform) and LAGs
- DoE : River Catchment Areas (WFD)
- DRD / DEHLG Island of Ireland Spatial Planning (competitiveness and infrastructure)

The Village : Lost in Space ?

“The way in which space is organised is crucial”

- €100 billion investment over next 10 years (£16 billion NI)
- Key aim “ a more internationally competitive Island of Ireland” (Lisbon Agenda) within European Strategy of Hotspots and Networks
- Addressing the ‘**tyranny of location**’ through transport and communication

The Village: Lost in Space ?

Where does the village fit in these new spaces ?

- Gottenburg : economic growth or sustainable development – natural and cultural assets

20 years from now ?

- Peak Oil Reserves passed ?
- Global warming ?

The Village: Lost in Space ?

The need for a Vision :

- Places 'Re-Placing' / Re-imagining
- The Village ?
 - In a space of flows; "Place equals Space with meaning" (Clifford and King 1989)
 - An "Oasis in Speed" (Thrift 1994)

The Village: Lost in Space ?



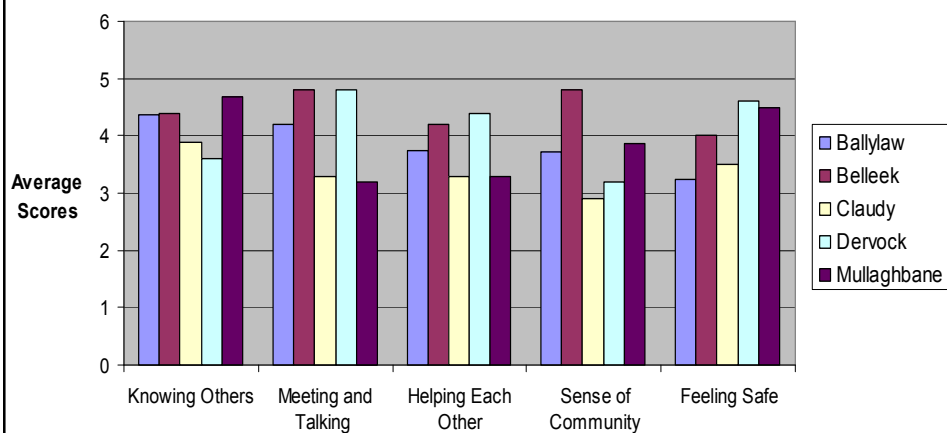
GDP or Happiness ?
Ireland wins because it successfully combines the most desirable elements of the new with the preservation of certain cosy elements of the old, such as stable family and community life.
(The Economist Intelligence Unit 2005)

2. Seeking Village Vibrancy

- **Learning Communities** : participatory planning emphasising assets as well as deficits
- **Beacon Communities** : Complementing secondary data with qualitative data from the ground
- **Vibrant Villages** : Combining the two : new models for village regeneration ?

Seeking Village Vibrancy

Research :Social Capital



Seeking Village Vibrancy

Location	Percentage of total
Shop / Chippy	32
Community centre / event	21
Pub	20
The Street / walks	12
Hobby / interest	6
Church	4
GP	3
Youth club	1
School gates	1

Most Common Meeting Places (Beacon Communities)

Seeking Village Vibrancy



The Village and Family

"here you can have more say in how your children are reared –there's less exposure to street culture"

"Extended family was the basis for community until now – we need to re-invent this to accommodate newcomers"

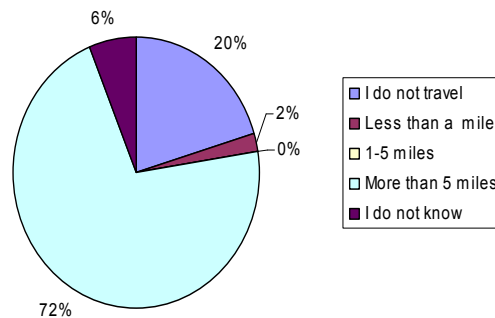
"wake up to young people; to underage drinking and pubs – if one does it the rest do it or they loose out"

"I would like to go to the USA first, then come home – I would get home sick – I would need to come back even if to walk the roads"

Seeking Village Vibrancy: Dromore

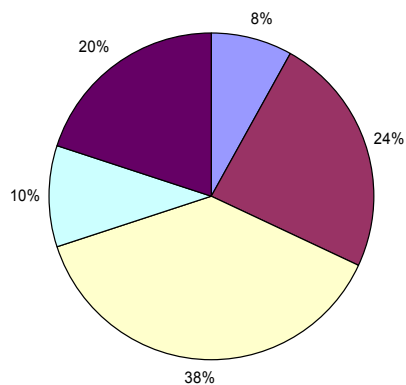
'I think the age where you know everyone has gone past, there's been over 80 houses built in the last 18 months and I'd know very few of the people living in them. I used to know everyone but that age has passed.'

Do you travel for social activities outside the village? How far do you travel?



Seeking Village Vibrancy: Dromore

How do you feel about the countryside around here generally?

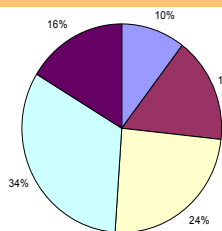


Yellow, Turquoise and Dark Blue = helpful or essential

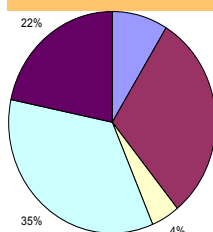
Light Blue and Red = Of Little Interest

Seeking Village Vibrancy: Optimism

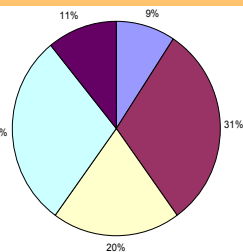
Dromore



Ballyhornan



Portballintrae



Yellow, Turquoise and Dark Blue = Optimistic

Light Blue and Red = Less Optimistic

Seeking Village Vibrancy

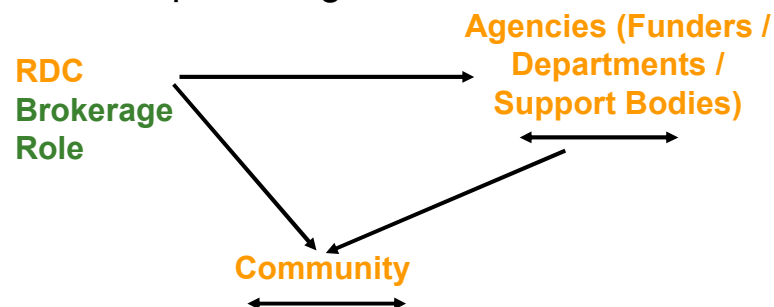
Key issues

- Farm / Village relations
- Young people and health
- Access to the countryside
- Access to services
- Affordable housing / planning and development
- Inclusion in local governance

Seeking Village Vibrancy

VV Model: Emphasis on

- relationship building



Seeking Village Vibrancy

VV Model: Emphasis on

- Openness :
 - Avoiding associations – navigating boundaries
 - Allowing time for ideas to develop
 - Communicating (one to one / community as a whole)
 - Enabling social entrepreneurs
 - Crystallising (plans, projects, funding) – Critical mass of initiatives

Renewing Village Renewal

- DARD Village Regeneration Measure : Focus for Integration (Axis 3, but also 2 and 1)
- The Idea of the Village:
 - Local foods and micro-enterprise
 - Energy and waste management
 - Extended school – village learning centre (European Rural Development through Education 2003 - 2005)
- ICT
- Eco-Villages



Renewing Village Renewal

- How can the village release human creativity ?
- How can the village offer alternatives to speed ?
- Can the village offer a model for sustainable development in complement to the city as economic driver ?
- What can this tell us about the urban / rural partnership ?

